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Roxbury, April 5, 1870.

My dear Tilton:

For the last three weeks, I have had to drop all epistolary interchanges in consequence of one of the severest colds and coughs I have ever had, attended with a good deal of fever, which I am slowly getting over, though still physically very weak.

I thank you for your letter of the 31st ult., and for the conciliatory spirit expressed in it; but you already know, by the letter sent to The Independent, signed by Mrs. Howe, Mrs. Livermore, Mr. Blackwell, and myself, in what light I feel constrained to regard your effort to induce the American Woman Suffrage Association to coalesce with the New York Society, or give place to an entirely new organization. I think it is the greatest slip you have ever made, and therefore regret it deeply for your own sake.

Both your language and the proposition you make imply that the American Association was organized at Cleveland in a spirit of "rivalry"; and to consent to enter into any such conference as you propose would prima facie be to acknowledge that your charge is well grounded. It was ~~a~~ mistake, on the part of Lucy Stone, to promise that "some of us" will be present at the conference; though she expressly wrote that ~~their~~ appearance would be unofficial, and ~~bring~~ nobody else. She feels that you have placed her in a false position by extracting from her letter a part of a sentence, and claiming her to be foremost in support of your scheme - a scheme which does not commend itself to her approval any more than it does to mine. Our Cleveland Association was organized with an absorbing regard for the credit and success of the Woman Suffrage Movement, and not with any wish or intention to have any contention or "rivalry" with the New York Society beyond a steadfast advocacy of the claims of the movement

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aforsaid). In neither word nor deed has it departed from its special object; and never was a national society organized with more deliberation, with longer previous announcement, with more harmony, under more cheering auspices, or in a more catholic spirit. It is strongly officered by the ablest advocates and friends of the cause throughout the country, and presents claims for national confidence and approval, on the part of those who profess to be for woman suffrage, which no other organization possesses. It has ever since been efficiently doing its appropriate work, turning neither to the right hand nor to the left; yet, though it has been in operation only some four months, you are calling for its sudden suppression or absorption, as though it had done nothing else than quarrel with the New York Society, Mrs. Stanton, Susan B. Anthony, and The Revolution!

My dear friend, you are entirely "at sea" in this matter.

In ~~regard~~ your letter to me, you admit

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that the proposed conference originated with yourself, "and with no other person."

You have therefore voluntarily set the country by the ears, not intentionally but really as a disturbing force on an extended scale! Why did you not proceed less impulsively?

You may find no difficulty in procuring the names of many excellent friends of the cause as to the desirableness of greater unity of co-operation; but that unity cannot be secured in the manner proposed by you.

Long since I have lost the respect and appreciation which I had for Mrs. Stanton and Miss Anthony; and now regarding them as untruthful, unscrupulous, and selfishly ambitious, I join my labors in behalf of woman with those whom I esteem and trust.

Yours, for all possible alliance,
Wm Lloyd Garrison.

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